

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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P 201712Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7416

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

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NO FOREIGN DISSEM/CONTROLLED DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/
BACKGROUND USE ONLY/WARNING NOTICE-SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE
SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINR, SA

SUBJECT: ALLEGED UK AND FRENCH ACTIVITIES REGARDING
SAUDI US RELATIONS

REF: STATE 10601; PARIS 1511

1. JUST AS PARIS (AND PERHAPS EVEN MORE SO) WE THINK IT
VERY UNLIKELY THAT ANY ELEMENT OF HMG ESTABLISHMENT IN
LONDON WOULD CONDONE SUCH ANTI-AMERICAN LINE BY ITS
DIPLOMATS IN JIDDA. BRITISH HAVE EXTREMELY LONG EXPER-
ENCE WITH THE ARABS AND KNOW THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES COULD
NOT LONG REMAIN SECRET IN ARAB COUNTRY SUCH AS SAUDI
ARABIA. BRITISH CONTINUE TO PLACE HIGH VALUE ON COOPERA-
TION WITH USG IN ARABIAN PENINSULA SECURITY AFFAIRS.
THEY WOULD BE CONCERNED AT ANY SUGGESTION THAT THEY ARE
SO SHORTSIGHTED AS TO BELIEVE THEIR (OR OTHER EUROPEAN)
INFLUENCE COULD REPLACE USG AS MAIN PILLAR OF WESTERN
SECURITY INTERESTS IN SAUDI ARABIA.

2. OF COURSE ONE CANNOT BE ABSOLUTELY SURE ABOUT INDI-
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VIDUALS SERVING IN THE AREA. WE THINK IT UNLIKELY, BUT

NOT IMPOSSIBLE, THAT SOME OVER-EAGER HMG REPRESENTATIVES INTENT ON CONTINUING SUCCESSFUL BRITISH PENETRATION OF SAUDI COMMERCIAL MARKET (MUCH OF IT IN SECURITY-RELATED FIELDS) MIGHT STOOP TO INSINUATIONS WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED (BY THE IMAGINATIVE ARAB MIND WHICH IS ALWAYS THIRSTY FOR SUCH GOSSIP) ALONG THE LINES REPORTED. BUT WE DOUBT SUCH BEHAVIOR WOULD CONTINUE IF LONDON MADE INQUIRIES OF ITS REPRESENTATIVES IN SAUDI ARABIA.

3. RECOMMENDATION: IF WASHINGTON AGENCIES ARE CONVINCED OF SOURCE'S TRUE RELIABILITY OVER SEVERAL YEARS, WE WOULD WELCOME DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTION TO APPROACH FCO OFFICIALS INFORMALLY AND IN LOW-KEY WITH (NON-ATTRIBUTED) ESSENCE OF THIS STORY AND ASK THAT THEY INVESTIGATE. AT VERY LEAST, THIS IS LIKELY TO END SUCH BEHAVIOR BY BRITISH PERSONNEL. IT MIGHT EVEN YIELD CORROBORATIVE (OR NON-CORROBORATIVE) INFORMATION ABOUT THE FRENCH.

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